

Destroying Enemy Strongholds



David Wilkerson (1931-2011) April 16, 2018

God's Amazing Promise to You in Your Trial

In Micah 7, the prophet delivers a prophetic message to Israel—one that applies to spiritually starved believers around the world today. Micah began his prophecy with a heartbroken cry: “Woe is me!...there is no cluster to eat” (Micah 7:1).

Micah was describing the effect of a famine in Israel—a famine of both food and God’s Word. His message echoes the words of an earlier prophecy by Amos: “‘Behold, the days are coming,’ says the Lord God, ‘that I will send a famine on the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. They shall wander from sea to sea, and from north to east; they shall run to and fro, seeking the word of the Lord, but shall not find it’” (Amos 8:11-12).

Micah also speaks for a hungry people today: the church of Jesus Christ. In his prophetic eye, Micah foresaw multitudes today running from place to place, seeking to hear a true word from God. He envisioned believers scurrying from church to church, all seeking to satisfy a hunger for food to nourish their souls. And the cry is still being heard: “Woe is me, for there is no cluster!”

My heart goes out to every person who has been snared by a bloodless, powerless, contemporary gospel.

They’ve never been confronted about their sins or heard the convicting word of truth that would produce Christ’s character in them. They’ve been given nothing with which to build their spiritual house except wood, hay and stubble. And when they’re called to stand before Jesus, everything they’ve built their foundation upon will burn.

Israel’s spiritual famine could not have come at a worse time: the very height of the nation’s moral decay. The time was ripe for a righteous testimony and a loving rebuke to the nation’s leaders for their sin. Yet at the very moment this should have happened, the church was becoming more worldly: “The faithful man has perished from the earth, and there is no one upright among men. They all lie in wait for blood; every man hunts his brother with a net” (Micah 7:2).

Micah’s message mirrors today’s headlines. People no longer trust in their leaders, their government, their judicial system. They don’t trust their employers, coworkers, friends or religion. There is a breakdown of trust at every level of society. As a result, everyone looks out only for himself. We no longer hear, “What can I do to help? How can I contribute?” Instead, the cry is, “What’s in it for me?”

Yet Micah turned his gaze away from all the decadence and greed in society, all the backsliding and compromise in the church: “Therefore I will look to the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me” (Micah 7:7). He told Israel, in essence: “Yes, depravity is plaguing our nation’s soul, causing ruin and decay. But ultimately, our focus isn’t on the awful condition of society. A true watchman doesn’t just warn of the sword; he

also proclaims God's promises. In the midst of chaos, he wants his holy remnant to know his heart toward them."

The same is true today. The Lord has a remnant whose eyes are not focused on the ruin of society or the church. Instead, they're preoccupied with the true focus of God's spokesmen, echoing the exhortations of the prophets, "Turn your eyes toward the Lord, seek his face, wait on him. He will sustain you and meet all your needs."

The promises that Micah begins to reveal at this point seem too incredible to be true. Yet all are intended for Christ's church in these present times. Micah 7:14 says, "Shepherd Your people with Your staff, the flock of Your heritage, who dwell solitarily in a woodland." The shepherd being addressed here can only be Christ: "Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant" (*Hebrews 13:20*). Micah is prophesying that Jesus would come to earth to shepherd and feed the flock. For those who turn to him in faith and trust, there will never be a famine.

What does this tell us about the present famine? It says we cannot always blame our lack of bread solely on dead churches or unconcerned pastors. If we turn to Jesus, he promises to feed us. This pledge is good even to those who live in solitary places, where there may be no church: "who dwell solitarily in a woodland" (*Micah 7:14*).

Micah 7:15 contains one of God's most glorious promises to his people.

"As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt, I will show them wonders" (*Micah 7:15*). This refers to the miracle God performed for Israel at the Red Sea. In so many words, God is telling us, "For years you've heard sermons about the great miracle I performed for my people. Yet as wonderful as that deliverance was, it was only a type, a shadow. I want to do for you a totally new thing."

Right now, you may be in a spiritual wilderness, facing the powers of Satan. You can feel his army of demonic entities thundering down on you. And just as the Israelites were helpless against their enemy, you are helpless against yours. Yet, as surely as God opened the Red Sea, allowing Israel to walk through on dry ground, he's going to open up your sea supernaturally. You're going to walk through whatever bonds the enemy has put on you, all of his spiritual opposition. And you'll no longer have reason to fear him.

Micah prophesied, "The nations shall see and be ashamed of all their might; they shall put their hand over their mouth; their ears shall be deaf" (*Micah 7:16*). Micah is telling us, "Your Red Sea deliverance will silence Satan's lies. He'll have to 'cover his mouth' in awe as God's Spirit moves in you." You'll no longer believe the enemy's accusations against you. Instead, his demonic powers will end up totally confused.

Many Christians quote 2 Corinthians 10:3-4: "Though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds." Most of us think of such strongholds as bondages such as sexual trespasses, drug addictions, alcoholism, outward sins we put at the top of a "worst sins" list. But Paul is referring to something much worse than our human measuring of sins.

A stronghold is an accusation planted firmly in your mind. And Satan establishes strongholds in God's people by implanting lies in their minds—falsehoods and misconceptions about God's nature. He may plant the lie that you're unspiritual, whispering repeatedly, "You'll never be free of your besetting sin. You're a phony, because your mind is still full of evil thoughts. You haven't changed. Now God has lost patience with you. You're not worthy to receive any more of his grace." Or he may try to destroy your marriage by saying, "You can't endure this relationship any longer unless your spouse changes."

If you keep listening to his lies, after a while you'll begin to believe them. Once you buy his evil argument, it will become imbedded in your mind and heart—and then it becomes a stronghold. This allows Satan to have power over you through your thought life. He doesn't have to possess your body; all he needs is a foothold in your mind, to inject lies that constantly twist and turn your thoughts with torment.

We can't pull down these strongholds by prayer alone. The only weapon that scares Satan and his hordes is the same one that scared him in the wilderness temptations of Jesus: the living Word of God. Only the Lord's truth can set us free. He promises to be God to us; to cleanse us, forgive us and cast away all our sins; to fill us with his Spirit; to lead, instruct and guide us through his Spirit; and to put within us all the power we need to walk in holiness and obedience.

According to Micah, here is the promise we are to cling to: “Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in mercy. He will again have compassion on us, and will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea” (*Micah 7:18-19*).

We do not subdue our sins; God subdues them.

And he has compassion on us, trampling all our iniquities underfoot, casting them into the sea never to be used against us again. Picture the children of Israel watching all those Egyptian soldiers disappear into the water forever. Now the Lord is telling us, “Those are your sins, and you’re going to watch them sink to the bottom of the sea. I have washed them away for good.” If you’ll lay hold of these promises, God promises your enemy will be scattered before your eyes.

“They shall lick the dust like a serpent; they shall crawl from their holes like snakes of the earth. They shall be afraid of the Lord our God, and shall fear because of You” (*Micah 7:17*). The “snakes of the earth” here means, figuratively, “creeping serpentine fears.” These refer to Satan’s planted fears, accusations imbedded in the mind. God says they’re going to crawl out of their holes in trembling fright.

What does this mean? Simply put, when you stand on his promises, every demonic power will squirm away from its stronghold in fear of almighty God. In addition, the devil and his army “shall be afraid of the Lord our God, and shall fear because of You.” You’ll no longer be afraid of the devil; he’ll be afraid of you! He fears every believer who walks in the almighty Deliverer’s promises.

God is faithful to fulfill his promise to cause every enemy to flee from us. Right now, your temptations, habits and besetting sins may look like impossible roadblocks before you. But the Lord promises to deliver you, for his own name’s sake. He is faithful to keep his Word.

Make this your prayer: “God, you have promised by oath to be Lord to me. You have said you would give me my own Red Sea experience. You’ve also said the devil would have to put his hand over his mouth, no longer able to accuse me with his lies. I stand on your promises now, Father. Deliver me, and glorify your name in my life.” Amen!

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